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THE SOVIET WORLD

Beria's removal, while it shows a weakness in the regime, strengthens the position of Malenkov and indicates that he is in complete control of the party. Through the appointment of Kruglov as MVD minister, Malenkov may now also be able to dominate the police.

The American embassy in Moscow has noted no unusual activity there since the announcement of Beria's arrest. Throughout the rest of the country, meetings of local and regional party organizations have been convened to denounce the "treacherous and vile" Beria. As yet, however, no meetings have been reported from Azerbaijan, home of Bagirov, the only other top Soviet official who did not attend the opera on 27 June.

A plenary session of the Lvov party organization accused Beria of promoting Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism "under the pretense of remedying deviations in the nationalities policy," giving credibility to earlier speculation that Beria may have championed the recent anti-Russification policy. The present charge suggests that the new regime may now return to the policy of Great Russian superiority.

A Moscow newspaper's report that Ivan Nosenko had succeeded V. A. Malyshev as minister for the transport and heavy engineering industry aroused speculation that Malyshev was in some way connected with Beria and has now followed him to jail. However, Malyshev's presence at the celebrated opera performance on 27 June suggested at that time that he was moving up to replace Melnikov, recently purged from the Ukrainian party leadership, as an alternate member on the party presidium. In such a case, he might relinquish his ministerial position to his deputy, Nosenko.

The rumor that Marshal Zhukov was under arrest has been disproved by his appearance at a 12 July reception at the Mongolian embassy. It seems unlikely that the army will play more than a neutral role unless the power struggle becomes intensified to a point where one faction must depend directly on military power. Such dependence would facilitate a coup by the military over the political leaders -- an eventuality which the Communist leadership has carefully guarded against for 35 years by permeating the military with police and party controls.

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In the Satellites, two important indications of a continuation of the softer internal policies followed the 10 July announcement of Beria's ouster. In a speech of 11 July, apparently intended to allay confusion over the new program, Hungarian party leader Rakosi reaffirmed liberal new policies announced a week earlier by Premier Nagy, and the Rumanian government announced the cancellation of certain categories of agricultural debts for private and collective farmers. The reforms which have been made or promised in Eastern Europe appear to be calculated to cope with long-standing problems that the Stalin regime had failed to solve. It seems logical, therefore, that these ostensible reforms will continue for the time being in order to reduce internal weaknesses. Unconfirmed rumors that Rumanian leader Gheorghiu-Dej, Czech president Zapotocky and Bulgarian premier Chervenkov have visited Moscow within the past two weeks may be indicative of further changes in Satellite policy.

American observers in the Satellite capitals see no signs that the Soviet power structure in Eastern Europe has begun to disintegrate. The Satellite regimes remain stable, and there is no good evidence that discontent recently has taken overt and bolder forms, except possibly in Hungary.

The American legation in Budapest reports that the open confusion and panic shown by minor party officials, following the government's reorganization on 4 July, have damaged the party's authority. Similar developments were an important factor in the appearance of open defiance in East Germany.

The developments inside the Kremlin and the Satellites do not appear to have changed the Soviet attitude toward negotiations with the West. Izvestia on 11 July commented on the Washington foreign ministers' meeting by criticizing US advocacy of preliminary conditions for high-level negotiations and emphasizing differences between the United States and its allies. The only specific reference in major commentaries to East-West negotiations was Izvestia's claim that Washington politicians "failed to weaken in the West European countries the movement for the settlement of controversial international problems on the basis of negotiations with the Soviet Union." This approach is similar to the 24 May Pravda editorial answering Prime Minister Churchill's call for a four-power conference and attacking plans for the Bermuda conference.

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JAPANESE ATTITUDE ON MSA ASSISTANCE

Formal American assurances on 26 June that MSA aid would not be predicated on Japan's rearmament or the sending of Japanese troops abroad apparently have allayed two major apprehensions of Japanese officials and the public concerning the mutual security program. The government now wishes to hasten formal negotiations in the hope of securing early Diet approval of an agreement.

Premier Yoshida's previously cautious attitude toward participation in a mutual security program was prompted by the precarious political position of his minority government and the belief that delay enhanced his bargaining position with the United States. Yoshida carefully avoided any commitment on the controversial MSA issue until he had determined the reaction of the Japanese public.

National Safety Director Kimura, apparently in a move to encourage public acceptance of MSA aid without directly involving Premier Yoshida, told the press on 9 June that his agency had prepared a five-year plan to build a 200,000-man defense force with supporting air and sea arms. In late June an exchange of Japanese and American notes on mutual assistance was followed by public and political reaction sufficiently favorable to prompt the government to propose the opening of formal negotiations for American aid.

Early Diet acceptance of an MSA agreement presumably will depend chiefly on internal politics. In the Diet, Liberal Party support of an MSA agreement appears assured and the opposition of the Rightist and Leftist Socialist parties seems certain. Thus the conservative opposition parties, the Progressives and Hatoyama Liberals, will occupy a pivotal position in the debate and vote on MSA.

The latter two parties have openly advocated the development of a Japanese army for defensive purposes, apparently understand the necessity for American financial assistance, and are reluctant to face a possible Diet dissolution. In the interests of political opportunism, however, they may be expected to employ tactics designed to weaken but not overthrow the present government on the MSA issue. The danger inherent in the opposition attack, particularly that of the Progressives, is that the government or the opposition may be driven to a confidence vote.

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Despite this possibility, the prospects for the conclusion of a standard MSA agreement appear favorable. The unstable political situation and the bleak economic outlook, however, probably impose obstacles to obtaining any official Japanese agreement to the goal envisaged by the United States of 10 divisions with supporting air and naval forces. In reaction to a report that US secretary of state Dulles had stated that Japan's 1953-54 budget contemplated the creation of a 10-division defense force, an expansion of six divisions over the present force, Japanese government officials on 11 July strongly reaffirmed Premier Yoshida's policy for a gradual defense build-up.

The Japanese government might agree to meet limited goals over a five-year period or to increase Japanese defense forces as the political and economic situation permits. Should a political merger of the conservative parties occur concurrently with substantial economic improvement, the probable strong reassertion of existing patriotic motivations might accelerate Japan's rearmament.

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CURRENT UNCERTAINTY IN BRITISH GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

General expectation of a major British cabinet shake-up within the next few months and the improbability that either Prime Minister Churchill or Foreign Secretary Eden will return to full duty before autumn increase the uncertainty about future Conservative leadership.

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Should Churchill return as prime minister for even a short time, Eden will probably be appointed deputy prime minister with responsibility for domestic affairs. The foreign secretary's claim to the prime ministership would then be virtually unassailable, provided his own health is fully restored.

Should Churchill retire, his obvious determination to see Eden succeed him will meet with strong support throughout the country. The latest public opinion poll, taken in March, showed that 64 percent favored Eden to succeed Churchill, while only 8 percent favored Chancellor of the Exchequer Butler.

On the other hand, Butler's prestige in the party is extremely high, and many party leaders would prefer him to Eden as head of the government. Should Eden be unable to return before Churchill steps down, a sharp conflict over the succession seems most likely. Such a conflict would tend to vitiate the government's recent gains in public confidence.

Meanwhile, the sense of uncertainty as to who would succeed Eden is increased by the fact that Acting Foreign Secretary Salisbury's peerage, which makes him unavailable for opposition questioning in House of Commons debates, might make his permanent appointment politically impossible. At the moment, there is no other outstanding candidate for the post of foreign secretary.

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INCREASED CHINESE AID TO VIET MINH

The considerable increase in Chinese military aid to the Viet Minh during recent months may represent an augmented program rather than a seasonal variation.

Until the spring of 1953 it was estimated that the Viet Minh received from China a monthly average of from 400 to 500 tons of military supplies, with the flow fluctuating from month to month as plans and requirements varied.

In May the French authorities in Indochina reported that Chinese aid from 1 January to 15 March was 1,780 tons, an average of over 700 tons a month. In early June, the French stated that the average monthly movement thus far in 1953 had been 724 tons of military supplies and 2,000 tons of rice. According to a 23 June report, the total tonnage delivered during May amounted to 800 tons, and during the first ten days in June 1,720 tons were delivered.

These reported increases undoubtedly reflect, in part, a normal seasonal rise. Now is the logical time for the Viet Minh to replenish its supplies in preparation for a campaign next fall. In view of recently improved Chinese Communist and Viet Minh transport facilities, however, there is a strong possibility that the higher rate of delivery will be maintained.

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[REDACTED] the Viet Minh now is using 700 to 800 trucks inside Indochina, approximately three times the number in operation last year.

[REDACTED] several Russian 37mm antiaircraft guns were delivered in June. The development of effective antiaircraft defense for Viet Minh supply dumps and transportation routes would be of considerable significance.

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In the past the Viet Minh was able to sustain major combat operations for no longer than two months, largely because of limited supplies and difficulties in moving supplies to forward areas. By next fall, in view of its improved transport, this two-month period will probably be lengthened if deliveries from China continue at the present rate.

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THE COSTA RICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Neither candidate in the 26 July Costa Rican presidential election can be relied on to continue the moderate, dependable performance of the present administration. Although both the leftist Jose Figueres and the conservative but Communist-supported Fernando Castro have a record of pro-United States statements, a government under either is likely to cause difficulties for American interests in the area.

Figueres

is an active enemy of the rightist governments of Central America. While he has drastically revised earlier threats to deal harshly with the United Fruit Company and to nationalize other foreign business interests, he has expressed sympathy for some policies of the pro-Communist government in Guatemala. In his two-year, million-dollar electoral campaign, he has sought to play down his record of international and domestic adventure and to stress his friendship for the United States; but his personality and associations may force him into positions inimical to US interests.

Castro, a wealthy rancher and front-man for the United Fruit Company, has produced no platform with which to counter Figueres' promises of sweeping reforms. In early June he was publicly endorsed by the Communist-front Progressive Party.

At present there appears to be little local interest in the election, a factor tending to favor the success of Figueres' superior organization. A recently scheduled election-day plebiscite on constitutional changes, however, may bring out the voters. Neither candidate has the support of the popular President Ulate, who is constitutionally barred from running for re-election. Should Ulate's followers nevertheless succeed in winning the balance of power in the Assembly, he may be able to stabilize an otherwise uncertain situation.

Immediate postelection violence sparked by strong-arm supporters of both candidates cannot be discounted. Ulate, however, aware of this possibility, has taken measures which will probably keep any such violence under control.

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